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General Assembly

Sixty-first session

Official Records

79th plenary meeting
Thursday, 14 December 2006, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda items 28 to 39, 110 and 118. I request the Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, Ms. Rana Salayeva of Azerbaijan, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

Ms. Salayeva (Azerbaijan), Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee): It gives me great pleasure to introduce to the General Assembly the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) submitted under agenda items 28 to 39, 110 and 118. Those reports are contained in documents A/61/404 to A/61/417 and they include the texts of draft resolutions and draft decisions recommended to the General Assembly for adoption. For the convenience of delegations, the Secretariat has prepared a checklist of Fourth Committee reports, which is contained in document A/C.4/61/INF/3*.

During the main part of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, the Fourth Committee held 27 formal meetings and adopted 25 draft resolutions and two draft decisions. Consistent with established practice, the Working Group of the Whole established by the Committee under agenda item 30, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space", also held informal meetings in the course of which it agreed on the texts of the two draft resolutions.

The work of the Fourth Committee was performed in a constructive environment and was done in both a results-oriented and flexible manner. The Committee held interactive dialogue sessions with the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information on the item entitled "Questions relating to information" and with the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the item entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects".

Likewise, the Committee benefited from an interactive dialogue session with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Rector of the University for Peace, the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Secretary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. That format allowed for the active participation of delegations in the deliberations of the Fourth Committee.

The report submitted under agenda item 28, "University for Peace", is contained in document A/61/404. The draft resolution submitted under that agenda item is contained in paragraph 7 of the report of the Fourth Committee. In conformity with General

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Assembly resolution 58/316, this item is to be continued every three years and will next be taken up at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The report submitted under agenda item 29, entitled "Effects of atomic radiation", is contained in document A/61/405. The Fourth Committee considered the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, contained in document A/61/46 and Corr.1. On this item, the Committee heard a very informative presentation by the Secretary of the Scientific Committee. The draft resolution submitted under this agenda item is contained in paragraph 7 of the report of the Fourth Committee.

The report submitted under agenda item 30, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space", is contained in document A/61/406. In considering this item, the Fourth Committee held several informal meetings of a Working Group of the Whole, chaired by the delegation of France. The Working Group formulated two draft resolutions, which were adopted by the Committee without a vote and are contained in paragraph 15 of the report.

The report submitted under agenda item 31, entitled "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East", is contained in document A/61/407. The Fourth Committee considered the report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, issued under the symbol A/61/13, as well as the report of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA, issued under the symbol A/61/347, and various reports of the Secretary-General. Under this item, the Committee adopted four draft resolutions by recorded votes. The draft resolutions submitted under this agenda item are contained in paragraph 19 of the report of the Fourth Committee. The Committee recommends those draft resolutions for adoption by the General Assembly.

The report on agenda item 32, entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories", is contained in document A/61/408. The Fourth Committee considered the report of the Special Committee concerning the protection and the promotion of the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories, published under the symbol A/61/500, as well as other reports of the Secretary-General issued under this item. The Fourth Committee had before it six draft resolutions and adopted five of them, which are contained in paragraph 25 of its report. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt those five draft resolutions.

The report on agenda item 33, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects", is contained in document A/61/409. The Fourth Committee held an interactive dialogue with Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and held a general debate on this item. The Committee will resume its consideration of this item after receiving the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations next year.

The report on agenda item 34, entitled "Questions relating to information", is contained in document A/61/410. The Fourth Committee reviewed the report of the Committee on Information (A/61/21 and Add.1) and the report of the Secretary-General (A/61/216) and heard a statement by Mr. Shashi Tharoor, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, with whom the Committee also held an interactive dialogue meeting. The Committee adopted, without a vote, two draft resolutions and one draft decision on the increase in the membership of the Committee on Information, which are contained in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the report of the Committee, respectively. By the terms of the draft decision, the Dominican Republic and Thailand would be appointed as members of the Committee on Information, and therefore the membership of the Committee would increase from 108 to 110 members. The Fourth Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt the draft resolutions and the draft decision.

The Fourth Committee considered the decolonization items in one cluster, with a single general debate for all decolonization items.

The report presented under agenda item 35, entitled "Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations", is contained in document A/61/411. The draft resolution submitted under this item is reflected in paragraph 7 of the report. The Fourth Committee recommends its adoption by the General Assembly.

The report submitted under agenda item 36, entitled "Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories", is contained in document A/61/412. Under that item, the Fourth Committee adopted a draft resolution, which is contained in paragraph 7 of the report. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt it.

The report submitted under agenda item 37, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations", is contained in document A/61/413. The Fourth Committee recommends that the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of the report be adopted by the General Assembly.

The report submitted under agenda item 38, entitled "Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories", is contained in document A/61/414. The Fourth Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution that appears in paragraph 6 of the report.

The report submitted under agenda item 39, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", is contained in document A/61/415. The Fourth Committee adopted six draft resolutions and one draft decision under this item. The Fourth Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt the six draft resolutions contained in paragraph 29 of the report and the draft decision contained in paragraph 30.

The report submitted under agenda item 110, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", is contained in document A/61/416. The Fourth Committee approved the draft programme of work of the Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, as contained in the annex to the report of the Committee.

The report submitted under agenda item 118, entitled "Programme planning", is contained in document A/61/417.

At this point, I would like to pay tribute to all delegations for the remarkable spirit of cooperation which prevailed in the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee. On behalf of the Bureau of the Fourth Committee, I would like to express our deep gratitude to all delegations that helped the Committee reach consensus on many draft resolutions and draft decisions.

I wish to pay a special tribute to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Ambassador Madhu Raman Acharya of Nepal. His in-depth knowledge of the wide range of subjects considered by the Committee allowed him to lead the Committee with great efficiency.

I would also like to express my appreciation to other members of the Bureau, namely Mr. Mahieddine Djeffal of Algeria, Ms. Mónica Bolaños-Pérez of Guatemala and Mr. Urban Andersson of Sweden, with whom I had the pleasure of working and who contributed significantly to the success of the Fourth Committee.

I should also like to thank the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Saijin Zhang, as well as the Political Affairs Officer, Ms. Tatyana Shestakova, and the rest of the dedicated team for their professional assistance.

In conclusion, I respectfully submit to the General Assembly for consideration and approval the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee which appear in the reports published under the symbols A/61/404 to A/61/417.

The President: I thank the Rapporteur of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that:

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a

delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified to the contrary in advance.

That means that where recorded votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we will proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

Before proceeding further, I would like once again to draw the attention of members to a note by the Secretariat entitled "Checklist of reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) to the General Assembly on agenda items 28 to 39, 110 and 118", which has been circulated as document A/C.4/61/INF/3. The note has been distributed disk to disk in the General Assembly Hall as a reference guide for action on draft resolutions and decisions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in its reports. In this connection, members will find in column two of the note the numbers of the draft resolutions or the meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, with the corresponding numbers for action in plenary meeting in column five of the same note.

Agenda item 28

University for Peace

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/404)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Special Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/108).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 28?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 29

Effects of atomic radiation

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/405)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Special Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/109).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 29?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 30

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/406)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 15 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I and II.

Draft resolution I is entitled "United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response". The Special

Political and Decolonization Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 61/110).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/111).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 30?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 31

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/407)

The President: The Assembly has before it four draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 19 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV, one by one. After all the votes have been taken, representatives will have the opportunity to explain their votes.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Assistance to Palestine refugees". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu

Draft resolution I was adopted by 173 votes to 1, with 10 abstentions (resolution 61/112).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and

subsequent hostilities". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution II was adopted by 170 votes to 6, with 8 abstentions (resolution 61/113).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines,

Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution III was adopted by 169 votes to 6, with 8 abstentions (resolution 61/114).

The President: We now turn to draft resolution IV, entitled "Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Fiji, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 170 votes to 6, with 8 abstentions (resolution 61/115).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 31?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 32

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/408)

The President: The Assembly has before it five draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 25 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to V, one by one. After all the decisions have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their votes.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Draft resolution I was adopted by 90 votes to 9, with 81 abstentions (resolution 61/116).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt,

El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, United States of America

Abstaining:

Angola, Australia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution II was adopted by 165 votes to 7, with 10 abstentions (resolution 61/117).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution III was adopted by 162 votes to 8, with 10 abstentions (resolution 61/118).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, United States of America

Abstaining:

Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Honduras, Malawi, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 157 votes to 9, with 14 abstentions (resolution 61/119).

[Subsequently, the delegation of India advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: Draft resolution V is entitled "The occupied Syrian Golan". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta,

Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Tuvalu

Abstaining:

Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Haiti, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, United States of America, Vanuatu

Draft resolution V was adopted by 163 votes to 2, with 16 abstentions (resolution 61/120).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 32.

Agenda item 33

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/409)

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) contained in document A/61/409?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 33.

Agenda item 34

Questions relating to information

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/410)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 9 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 10 of the same report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution and the draft decision.

The draft resolution, entitled "Questions relating to Information", is in two parts. Part A is entitled "Information in the service of humanity"; part B is entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/121 A and B).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision, entitled "Increase in the membership of the Committee on Information". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 35

Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/411)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The draft resolution was adopted by 179 votes to none, with 4 abstentions (resolution 61/122).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 35?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 36

Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/412)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria,

Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The draft resolution was adopted by 179 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions (resolution 61/123).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 36?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 37

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/413)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

Mr. Romeu (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to propose two amendments to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of the report (A/61/413), under agenda item 37, in order to harmonize the text of the draft resolution with that of the resolution on the same subject adopted in July by the Economic and Social Council.

In operative paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, the word "resolution" should be in the singular and the words "and 598 (XXX) of 2 July 2004" and the associated footnote should be deleted.

The second amendment would delete operative paragraph 13 of the draft resolution. Finally, it would be necessary to renumber all subsequent paragraphs.

I understand that all of the amendments that I have just presented orally have been distributed to delegations in writing. I trust that, with the foregoing explanation, the General Assembly will be able to adopt these oral amendments without a vote. However, I am aware that some delegations may not have had sufficient time to consider them in depth.

Mr. Jaafari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We listened carefully to the statement just made by the preceding speaker, who proposed amendments to the draft resolution recommended in document A/61/413, under agenda item 37. Those amendments have just been orally proposed, and I believe that they were distributed by e-mail late last night. Many Member States — particularly members of

the Special Committee of 24 — have thus not had time to consider the proposed amendments. Therefore, on behalf of the members of the Special Committee of 24 and other States concerned, I request that the consideration of this item be postponed to enable the members of the Special Committee of 24 and other States to negotiate with the delegation proposing the amendments, with a view to reaching a consensus.

The President: Members have heard the proposal made by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. If I hear no objection, the Assembly will postpone its consideration of this report to a later date to be announced.

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38

Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/414)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/124).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 38?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 39

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/415)

The President: The Assembly has before it six draft resolutions recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee in paragraph 29 of its report and a draft decision recommended by the Committee in paragraph 30 of the same report.

I now call on the representative of Belarus, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before the Assembly takes action on those recommendations.

Mr. Yaroshevich (Belarus): Belarus will not participate in the voting on draft resolution I, "Question of Western Sahara". When the lines of division between our two good friends are so deep, we cannot help becoming hostage to the lack of understanding between them — and hostages' hands are tied.

Issues such as that of Western Sahara cannot be positively influenced by a vote of the General Assembly alone if the essential agreement between the States parties most concerned is not in place. We again ask our trusted partners and friends in the Non-Aligned Movement, Algeria and Morocco, to rally all available goodwill and determination to seek a mutually acceptable solution in the course of an open and frank dialogue.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to VI and on the draft decision, one by one. After all of the decisions have been taken, representatives will again have the opportunity to explain their vote or position.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Question of Western Sahara". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Chad, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominica, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent

and the Grenadines, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, France, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Palau, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Vanuatu, Yemen

Draft resolution I was adopted by 70 votes to none, with 91 abstentions (resolution 61/125).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Question of New Caledonia". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 61/126).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Question of Tokelau". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 61/127).

The President: Draft resolution IV is entitled "Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands". This draft resolution is in two parts. Part A is entitled "General". Part B is entitled "Individual Territories". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname,

Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Equatorial Guinea, Israel, Samoa, United States of America

Draft resolution IV was adopted by 173 votes to none, with 4 abstentions (resolution 61/128).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Saint Lucia advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: Draft resolution V is entitled "Dissemination of information on decolonization".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

France

Draft resolution V was adopted by 176 votes to 3, with 1 abstention (resolution 61/129).

The President: Draft resolution VI is entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus,

Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Belgium, France

Draft resolution VI was adopted by 176 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions (resolution 61/130).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Mexico advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: We turn now to the draft decision entitled "Question of Gibraltar". The Special Political and Decolonization Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions.

Mr. Romeu (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Spanish delegation voted in favour of resolution 61/128, which refers to various Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Spain supports the application of the principle of self-determination to the Territories included in that omnibus resolution. At the same time, my delegation recalls that the principle of self-determination is not the only important principle involved in carrying out the decolonization of Non-Self-Governing Territories. In certain cases, what applies is the principle of territorial integrity, in accordance with the doctrine established in a number of General Assembly resolutions.

One such case is that of Gibraltar, the subject of a specific decision that has just been adopted by consensus. In that respect, I would note that, in the decolonization process for that Territory, Spain, in conformity with the mandate of the General Assembly, is willing to move forward without delay towards a definitive solution that can be the result only of negotiation with the United Kingdom, as the administering Power, in which the interests and aspirations of Gibraltar must be heeded.

Mr. Limeres (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine delegation regrets that the General Assembly has again faced a voting scenario on this question, breaking once more with the decade-long tradition whereby resolutions on this item have been adopted by consensus.

My country has always supported the efforts of the international community to find a political solution that is just, definitive and mutually acceptable to all parties involved in this question. Argentina has traditionally contributed military observers to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara.

The Argentine Republic is aware that the issue of Western Sahara is being discussed in the Fourth

Committee because it is an object of decolonization. Since 1975, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions determining that resolution 1514 (XV) is applicable to the subject of Western Sahara and that the principle of self-determination must guide the decolonization process in that Territory. It is worth noting that the consultative opinion of the International Court of Justice arrived at the same conclusions.

In that sense, it is important to my country that all issues of decolonization continue to be addressed in the body of primary competence within the United Nations system — the Special Political and Decolonization Committee — and that the criteria for the treatment of those issues be modified not unilaterally, but only through collective decisions of this General Assembly.

In the particular case of Western Sahara, that position translates into the ongoing support of Argentina for the search for a lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that provides for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in accordance with Security Council and General Assembly resolutions adopted over the past two years.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation reaffirms that Costa Rica has always believed that the decolonization process should be governed by the provisions of resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960, which declared the inalienable right to self-determination for all peoples.

In 1975, Costa Rica held a seat on the Security Council. Since that time, faithful to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter and to the aforementioned resolution, we have rejected all claims by any State on the territory of what was once the Spanish Sahara. We believed then and continue to believe that the subject of Western Sahara is inscribed on the decolonization agenda and should therefore be governed by the guiding principles of the United Nations and by respect for the colonial borders that governed the decolonization of Africa, as ratified in paragraph (b) of article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

In the same vein, Costa Rica supported the Security Council's decisions to organize a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara, in particular its resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991). Given that consistent vision with respect to Western Sahara, last year the General Assembly adopted a consensus resolution to that effect.

This year, unfortunately, that consensus was not reached. In light of contradictory positions, Costa Rica opted to abstain in the voting in the Fourth Committee as the most reasonable way of encouraging the parties to seek a satisfactory agreement as soon as possible. We abstained again in the General Assembly, but would not wish our abstention to be construed as a sign of support for one party to the conflict over another. Moreover, we would not wish thereby to be thought to be straying from the position we have held since the issue of Western Sahara was inscribed on the agenda. On the contrary, with respect to decolonization we maintain the same principles today that we adopted almost 50 years ago and with the same vigour that we did then.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I would like to explain Austria's vote on resolution 61/125 on the question of Western Sahara, under agenda item 39.

Austria regrets that it was not possible to achieve consensus on the resolution on the question of Western Sahara. We would certainly have preferred the resolution to be adopted by consensus, and we hope that that will again be possible next year.

We voted in favour of the draft resolution in the Fourth Committee on 13 October and just now in plenary, as the text is virtually unchanged in comparison to that which the General Assembly adopted by consensus last year. I would like to underline, however, that Austria's vote in favour of the resolution should not be interpreted as favouring one party over the other. We continue to support a just and lasting political solution to the question of Western Sahara that is acceptable to all sides and which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, as laid down in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. We also continue fully to support the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy in their efforts to contribute to a solution of the question of Western Sahara.

Austria acknowledges the recent announcement by Morocco that the autonomy plan for Western Sahara has now been submitted to His Majesty the King for his consideration. We are interested in learning more about the specific proposals contained in the plan and look forward to its official presentation.

Austria hopes for substantial progress in the future. We are convinced that the parties will engage

with the United Nations in good faith to find a peaceful solution.

Mr. Hanz (Germany): Germany deeply regrets the fact that it was not possible for the parties to reach agreement on this year's resolution on the question of Western Sahara.

Germany voted in favour of this year's resolution for consistency's sake. The text is identical to last year's resolution, on which both parties had reached consensus. We would like expressly to state that our vote must not be interpreted as a position for or against any of the parties to the conflict.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning the Western Sahara and the recommendations of his Personal Envoy, Mr. Van Walsum, contained in the report. Germany supports all efforts aimed at finding a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

We note with interest that Morocco is working on new proposals for the extended autonomy of Western Sahara, and would welcome a presentation of those proposals as soon as possible.

Mr. Ba-Omar (Oman) *(spoke in Arabic)*: My delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution I, contained in document A/61/415, "Question of Western Sahara". My Government took that position because the two parties were not able to reach agreement on a text. We would like to state for the record that Security Council resolution 1495 (2003) considers the peace plan as the best political solution, based on its approval by the two parties. Our position is based on the fact that the plan did not receive the support of both parties. We hope that both parties will find the necessary mechanisms and means to settle this question in the near future on the basis of a comprehensive and just solution.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein) *(spoke in French)*: Liechtenstein has just voted in favour of the draft resolution on Western Sahara, which is virtually identical to the one adopted last year by consensus. Given the lack of progress in settling the matter, Liechtenstein believes it would have been inappropriate to changing its position.

My delegation deeply regrets that the negotiations between the parties did not lead to mutual understanding. However, our vote must in no way be understood as indicating support for either of the parties concerned. Liechtenstein fully supports the efforts of the Secretary-General, who, through his Personal Envoy, is continuing to help the parties work towards a political settlement that just, lasting and mutually acceptable.

Liechtenstein's position on the right to self-determination is well known, particularly in respect of innovative approaches to the interpretation and realization of that right. We believe that this right cannot be reduced simply to the right to independence. We believe that various forms of self-administration and self-government cold be envisaged on a case-by-case basis.

Accordingly, we await with great interest the autonomy plan announced by the Kingdom of Morocco, and we will certainly study it carefully.

Mr. Pereyra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Concerning the question of Western Sahara, Peru has always maintained that it supports the efforts of the United Nations to arrive at a solution that is acceptable to the parties and is in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation would like to express its concern at the current deadlock in the negotiations. We urge all parties to heed the appeal of the Secretary-General to resume negotiations without preconditions, so as to arrive at a just and lasting political solution leading to the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

Today's abstention should not be understood as prejudging any agreement between the parties or Peru's stance in the Security Council, where this item remains on the agenda.

Mr. Baum (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution before the Assembly today on the question of Western Sahara is simply an updated version of the one adopted by consensus at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. At that time, Switzerland had supported the consensus that was arrived at between the parties. We regret that it was impossible to arrive at such a consensus this year.

In the absence of any major progress towards a resolution of the question of the Western Sahara, the Swiss delegation felt that there were not sufficient

grounds to justify any change in its position. Neither our vote today in the plenary of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session nor our vote of 13 October last in the Fourth Committee reflect a stance in favour or against either of the parties involved.

Switzerland supports the efforts made by the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to reach a negotiated solution that is acceptable to all parties concerned in the context of the question of Western Sahara.

My delegation shares the view of the Personal Envoy, who believes that negotiations between the parties is the only credible way of proceeding given the current deadlock, of which the peoples of the region are the primary victims.

Switzerland urges the parties to respond favourably to the appeal by the Secretary-General to open negotiations without any preconditions. We hope that this forum will be conducive to the presentation of the new proposals to be made soon by the Kingdom of Morocco. Switzerland awaits those proposals with great interest. Such negotiations must result in an equitable, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

Mr. Vidouris (Greece): Greece would like to make a statement in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted on the question of Western Sahara, on which we voted in favour. In that regard, we would like to reiterate, as is mentioned in the resolution, that the lack of progress in the settlement of the dispute on Western Sahara remains a source of potential instability in the region and obstructs the economic development of the Maghreb region, and that, in view of this, the quest for a political solution is critically needed.

We therefore strongly support the efforts of the Secretary-General and of his Personal Envoy to achieve a mutually acceptable political to the dispute over Western Sahara, and we reiterate the call on all the parties and the States of the region to continue to cooperate fully with the United Nations to end the current impasse and to achieve progress towards a mutually acceptable political solution that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): Italy is deeply concerned at the present stalemate in the Western Sahara, particularly with respect to its consequences for the civilian population. Italy is strongly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, among which is the purpose of developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as stated in Article I, paragraph 2.

Italy strongly believes in the rejection of violence as a means of resolving international disputes. Italy looks forward to a consensual solution to this long-standing dispute. All parties should enhance the existing dialogue in order to maximize the chances of working out a mutually acceptable solution that would serve the cause of the Sahrawi people. Italy is therefore confident that all parties involved will spare no effort, in a spirit of constructive engagement, and also through direct contacts and other means, to find an appropriate settlement. Such an achievement will be the necessary point of departure to relaunch a fruitful regional cooperation among all the States and peoples of the Maghreb.

In that regard, we view with interest the announcement made by Morocco to propose a plan before 31 March 2007.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom voted in favour of the resolution on Western Sahara. We previously voted for the draft resolution at the committee stage. The United Kingdom acknowledges the considerable efforts made to reach a consensus on the text of the draft resolution and regrets that a consensus text could not be agreed. The United Kingdom notes that the text is based closely on the resolution agreed at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

The United Kingdom would like to thank the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, Peter van Walsum, for their continuing efforts to find a political solution to the question of Western Sahara. The United Kingdom remains concerned that the question of Western Sahara continues to be unresolved, with consequent problems for the people of the region as a whole. The United Kingdom hopes that there will be progress towards a solution over the coming months and looks forward to new initiatives intended to move the situation beyond the current impasse, including the publication of Morocco's latest proposals.

It remains the United Kingdom's view that any solution to this issue has to be mutually acceptable, in

line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and must provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in accordance with United Nations requirements, again, as set out in previous Security Council resolutions.

I would now like to turn to the issue of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom does not believe that the principle of territorial integrity is applicable to the decolonization of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom would not ever enter into arrangements under which the people of Gibraltar would pass under the sovereignty of another State against their wishes. We support the right of self-determination of the people of Gibraltar, promoted in accordance with the other principles and rights set out in the United Nations Charter. In that respect, however, I should like to recall our well-known position with regard to article X of the Treaty of Utrecht.

Her Majesty's Government believes that, despite the well-known differences with Spain on sovereignty matters, it is possible for the three parties to work together for the benefit of the people of Gibraltar and the surrounding region.

Mr. Song Young-wan (Republic of Korea): My delegation expresses its deep regret that this year, despite strenuous efforts by the parties concerned, consensus was not possible on the resolution on Western Sahara. The Government of the Republic of Korea has supported the position that the question of Western Sahara should be resolved through a mutually acceptable political solution based on the principle of self-determination, in line with the resolution adopted by consensus last year during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My delegation abstained in the voting on the current resolution, because we believe that a consensus resolution should be adopted through dialogue and negotiation between the parties concerned. Therefore, our abstention should not be interpreted as an indication that we favour one party over another.

Mr. Cato (Philippines): Like those who spoke before us, the Philippines would have preferred that the resolution on the question of Western Sahara be adopted without a vote, as we did last year. The Philippines abstained, because we would like to encourage our good friends Algeria and Morocco to exert extra efforts to find agreement and move the process forward. We would like to underscore, however, that the Philippine abstention should not be seen as an expression of support for either party to this long-standing issue. Lastly, we hope that all parties concerned will continue to take much-needed steps to help bring about a peaceful and lasting solution to this issue.

Mr. Malhotra (India): India supports efforts aimed at a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara. We believe that such a solution can be reached through dialogue in a spirit of cooperation. We share the sense of disappointment that it was not possible to work out a consensus this year on the General Assembly resolution on the question of Western Sahara. India's abstention in the voting should not be interpreted as its being in favour of either side.

Mr. Chaimongkol (Thailand): With regard to the resolution on the question of Western Sahara, my delegation wishes to join other Member States in expressing deep concern and regret that the parties concerned have not been able to find a consensual political solution to this protracted dispute.

Thailand wishes to reaffirm its position of neutrality on this issue by having abstained in the voting on the resolution on the question of Western Sahara. Thailand also wishes to reiterate that our decision to abstain should by no means be interpreted as favouring one side over the other. It should, rather, be interpreted as a sincere appeal for the matter to be resolved in the near future, for the benefit of the people of this region and in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Thailand therefore strongly urges the parties concerned to seek a peaceful and lasting political solution through dialogue and negotiations. Thailand also calls for concerted effort on the part of the international community to assist the parties involved in order to expedite the settlement of this dispute.

Mrs. Wandel (Denmark): Denmark abstained in the voting on the resolution on the question of Western Sahara. Every year for the past 18 years, with the exception of the year 2004, the parties have been able to arrive at a consensus text on the issue of Western Sahara. We deeply regret that a consensus was not reached this year.

Denmark would like to emphasize its firm neutral position in relation to this conflict. We continue to support a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. All parties to the conflict are encouraged to show good faith and to work towards that goal through dialogue.

Denmark sincerely hopes and expects to see substantial progress towards a peaceful settlement in the coming months. We expect Morocco to fulfil its promise to formally present its plan before 31 March 2007.

Mr. Piperkov (Bulgaria): The Republic of Bulgaria consistently supports the efforts to find a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to the question of Western Sahara, achieved through political means and based on the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. As an expression of that position, Bulgaria joined the consensus last year for the adoption of General Assembly resolution 60/114, whose text is almost exactly repeated in resolution 61/125 this year.

In view of that, we would like to point out our concern at the lack of progress on a peaceful solution to the problem and at the fact that, despite extensive efforts during the current session of the General Assembly, a consensus on the text of the resolution was not possible. Therefore, we did not participate in the voting in the Fourth Committee, and now in the General Assembly the Bulgarian delegation abstained. That abstention should not be interpreted as being in favour of any party; rather, it should be considered an expression of our constructive position on achieving a mutually acceptable political solution.

The Republic of Bulgaria reaffirms its support for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and, in particular, for the endeavours of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General. The implementation of the mandate of MINURSO does not exclude, but rather requires, the exchange of opinions among the parties concerned within any appropriate framework, including on a bilateral basis. Bulgaria remains convinced that the long-term solution of the question of Western Sahara will promote the security, cooperation and integration process in North-West Africa.

Ms. Malcata (Portugal): I would like to explain the Portuguese vote on draft resolution I, on the question of Western Sahara. Portugal recalls its earlier statement in the Fourth Committee and stresses that its abstention should not be interpreted as being in favour of either one of the opposing parties on the issue, but rather that Portugal wishes that a consensus solution for the question of Western Sahara be found.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 39?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 110

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/416)

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) contained in document A/61/416?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

It was so decided.

Agenda item 118

Programme planning

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/61/417)

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) contained in document A/61/417?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 118. The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) before it.

Agenda item 69 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Draft resolution A/61/L.45

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Draft resolutions A/61/L.42, A/61/L.44 and A/61/L.46

(d) Assistance to the Palestinian people

Draft resolution A/61/L.47

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 69 and its sub-items (a) and (d) at its 52nd and 53rd plenary meetings, held on 13 November 2006.

Before proceeding further, on behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Jean-Marc Hoscheit of Luxembourg for coordinating the consultations and negotiations on the draft resolutions under agenda item 69 and for having successfully completed the task entrusted to him.

In connection with draft resolution A/61/L.45, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat to announce some corrections.

Mr. Botnaru (Chief, General Assembly Affairs Branch): The following corrections should be made to draft resolution A/61/L.45 to accurately reflect the text agreed in the informal consultations. In the second line of the sixteenth preambular paragraph, the phrase "humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel" should read "United Nations personnel and associated humanitarian personnel". In operative paragraph 2, the words "and associated" should be deleted. In the first line of operative paragraph 4, the word "involved" should be deleted. In operative paragraph 18, the word "law" should be added after "national" in the last line. In operative paragraph 28, "United Nations" should be added before "Department of Safety and Security" and, immediately following, "to ensure" should read "for". In the first line of operative paragraph 29, "ensuring" should read "facilitating".

These corrections will be reflected in the final version of the resolution.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.42.

Mr. Oosthuizen (South Africa): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development", as contained in document A/61/L.42.

It is well known that natural disasters affect the social and economic development of all countries, but particularly developing countries. The latter do not always have the capacity to deal with the adverse impacts of such events. Although it may not be possible to completely eliminate the suffering caused by natural disasters, efforts towards relief and development assistance could help in the recovery and long-term rehabilitation of those affected by such disasters.

By introducing this draft resolution, the Group of 77 and China again highlights the importance of strengthening international cooperation, especially through the effective use of multilateral mechanisms in the provision of humanitarian assistance during all phases of a disaster, from relief and mitigation to development.

At the same time, it is recognized that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory. The importance of the principles contained in General Assembly resolution 46/182, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, are also highlighted in this draft resolution.

The draft resolution also recognizes the need to continue to explore ways to strengthen the rapid response capacities of the international community to provide immediate humanitarian relief, building on existing arrangements and ongoing initiatives. In this regard, the role that information and telecommunications technology can play in disaster response is also highlighted. Emphasis is also placed on the importance of addressing vulnerability and integrating risk reduction into all phases of natural disaster management, post-natural disaster recovery and development planning, while also recognizing the

value of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected countries.

The draft resolution is also mindful of the importance of rapid access to funds to ensure a more predictable and timely United Nations response to humanitarian emergencies, welcoming, in this regard, the establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund through resolution 61/2. An appeal is also made that all disasters should receive equal and adequate response, bearing in mind that the allocation of resources should be driven by needs.

Lastly, the draft resolution expresses deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact, which result in massive loss of life and property worldwide. It is that concern, together with the recognition that natural disasters impact negatively on achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, which necessitates the continued attention of the international community to this important issue.

As in the past, many countries have sponsored this important draft resolution. In addition to the countries listed in the document, we are pleased to announce that the following countries have joined the list of sponsors of the draft resolution: Andorra, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine.

It is now my privilege, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to request the Assembly to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.44.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam — the draft resolution contained in document A/61/L.44, entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster". I wish to thank the other 153 Member States that have sponsored the draft resolution. In addition to those mentioned in document A/61/L.44, the following countries have joined as sponsors of the draft resolution: Belize, Bulgaria, France, Georgia, Germany, Moldova, Oman, San Marino and Serbia.

ASEAN expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports, which provide perspectives on lessons learned from the ongoing recovery efforts in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster, and for his recommendations on the subject.

Natural disasters affect both the rich and the poor. At any time and any day a natural disaster can strike. From Hurricane Katrina to the Indian Ocean tsunami, we have heard of countless stories of people losing their loved ones and their homes and property to natural disasters. We must therefore remain vigilant in our global effort to prevent catastrophes by minimizing the negative effects of such disasters.

There are some indications that worse is yet to come. Last year alone, there was a high incidence of extreme weather events all over the world. More recently, hundreds of people died from mudslides after Typhoon Durian struck the Philippines.

Developing countries stand to lose a lot as a result of their lack of capacity to handle post-disaster rehabilitation, and it is their goal to prevent disasters from taking away the fruits of hard-earned development. Closer international cooperation is therefore urgent.

ASEAN's efforts in the area of disaster reduction are aimed at strengthening our regional response capacity, taking into consideration the lessons of the Indian Ocean tsunami and other disasters in other parts of the world. ASEAN believes that the effects of disaster can be managed and that risks can be reduced through development programmes and quick-response actions. The Indian Ocean tsunami revealed ASEAN member countries' lack of preparedness and weaknesses in responding collectively to such large-scale calamities. Although ASEAN had a mechanism for mutual assistance for natural disasters that had been in existence since June 1976, the mechanism needed to be restructured to meet the current needs, including identifying and mobilizing available resources into an effective response system.

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response has replaced the 1976 arrangements. We have undertaken several activities to test the regional response mechanism, including a simulated exercise on flood disaster, conducted in Cambodia in September. A few months earlier, teams from the ASEAN member countries were among the first to respond to the earthquake that took place in Indonesia on 27 May 2006. Teams from Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand were at various locations providing medical assistance and relief efforts for the earthquake victims, in close coordination with the Indonesian authorities. Other ASEAN member countries, including Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, sent food supplies and cash contributions to Indonesia. The ASEAN Regional Forum is also planning to develop guidelines for civilian and military cooperation to ensure swift responses to natural disasters. The plan includes taking an inventory of the transport capabilities of the region's armed forces that can be used for humanitarian operations in the aftermath of a calamity.

Draft resolution A/61/L.44 updates General Assembly resolution 60/15 of 14 November 2005. The draft resolution emphasizes a number of salient points. First, it stresses the need for the continued support and assistance of the international community in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase. Secondly, it highlights the need for contributions to the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia in support of the establishment of an early warning system in accordance with the needs of the countries in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asian countries.

Thirdly, it emphasizes the importance of the Global Consortium for Tsunami Affected Countries to identify common practices and to implement actions for the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase. Fourthly, it stresses the need for the regular updating of recovery assessment by the Governments of affected countries, the United Nations and international and regional financial institutions, with the participation of local communities, in order to measure progress and identify gaps and priorities. Fifthly, it emphasizes the importance of promoting transparency and accountability among donors and recipient countries and the continued support of donors for further development of online tracking systems of affected countries. Sixthly, it highlights the support of international agencies for the development of national capacity for tsunami warning and response systems.

We hope that this important draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, as it plays a key role in supporting affected countries' efforts in disaster-risk management.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Finland to introduce draft resolutions A/61/L.45 and A/61/L.47.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): It is my pleasure, on behalf of the European Union, to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.45, entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel", and draft resolution A/61/L.47, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people". With regard to draft resolution A/61/L.45, I am pleased to announce that, in addition to the countries listed in the text, Albania, Belize, Bulgaria, the Central African Republic, Gambia, Georgia, Mali, Moldova, Montenegro, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Turkey and Uruguay have requested to be included as sponsors.

Humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel conducting operations in the field provide an invaluable service to millions of people in need, often at great personal risk. The deeply disturbing information on the deaths, injuries and harassment of those personnel, as well as the fact that the perpetrators of such acts of violence seemingly operate with impunity, clearly demonstrates that this issue deserves our urgent attention.

The draft resolution before us addresses both the issues of strengthening the normative framework for the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel, as well as efforts to promote and enhance the security management system of the United Nations.

First, on the normative framework, the draft resolution calls upon all States to consider becoming parties to and to respect fully their obligations under the relevant international instruments, mindful of the need to promote the universality of the United Nations Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. The Optional Protocol to the Convention is a very important step forward in the protection of United Nations and associated personnel. The draft resolution calls upon all States to consider

signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol as soon as possible and urges States parties to put in place appropriate national legislation, as necessary, to enable the effective implementation of the Optional Protocol.

The draft resolution also recommends that the Secretary-General continue to seek the inclusion of, and that host countries include, key provisions of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, among others, in the host country agreements and other related agreements negotiated between the United Nations and those countries. Importantly, the draft resolution reaffirms the need to hold accountable those responsible for all threats and acts of violence against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, and urges States to end impunity for such acts.

Secondly, the draft resolution acknowledges the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to further enhance the security management system of the United Nations, welcoming the establishment and the work of the Department of Safety and Security. The draft recognizes the need for continued efforts to enhance coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and other relevant organizations to address mutual security concerns in the field. The draft resolution also invites the United Nations and, as appropriate, other humanitarian organizations working closely with host States, to further strengthen the analysis of threats to the safety and security of their personnel. The draft also highlights the importance of information on the range and scope of security incidents involving humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel.

In addition, the draft resolution addresses the importance of providing humanitarian and United Nations staff with adequate information and training on security, and encourages collaborative initiatives to address security training needs. Recalling the essential role of telecommunication resources, the draft also addresses the issue of limiting and, whenever possible, lifting the restrictions placed on the use of communications equipment by United Nations and associated personnel.

The increasing dangers faced by international and national staff involved in humanitarian and United Nations operations underline the urgency of the need for further measures to reinforce their safety and security. It is our sincere hope that this draft resolution will contribute to wider efforts to provide the necessary security and protection required for humanitarian and United Nations and associated personnel in assisting those in need.

Finally, I would like to thank all interested delegations for their constructive engagement on the text in the informal consultations, which were conducted in a positive spirit. My delegation and other sponsors hope that the draft resolution contained in document A/61/L.45 will be adopted by consensus.

I will now turn to draft resolution A/61/L.47, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

At the outset, I would like to announce a minor editorial correction to the text. In the twelfth preambular paragraph, there should be quotation marks around the phrase "Stockholm International Donor Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories".

The European Union (EU) reiterates its commitment to the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people. The overall EU assistance to the Palestinian people this year exceeds €655 million, which is an increase from last year and makes us again the single biggest donor.

Under the present circumstances, we underline the wider role played by the temporary international mechanism in providing essential relief to a large part of the Palestinian population since its launch in June 2006. The contributions of other donors to the mechanism are deeply valued. In view of the protracted deterioration of the socio-economic situation of the Palestinians, the European Union has endorsed a further three-month extension of the mechanism until March 2007.

The European Union commends the efforts of President Abbas over the past six months to form a Government of national unity. We stand ready to work with a Palestinian Government that adopts a platform reflecting the Quartet principles. If such a Government is formed, the EU undertakes to resume partnership with the Palestinian Government and encourages its Quartet partners to do likewise; to continue, with other donors, providing financial support; and to prepare, in cooperation with the new Government, a long-term plan on capacity-building, border management and

unified and effective security forces, as well as a functioning administration.

The present draft resolution is primarily of a humanitarian nature. The EU has repeatedly reiterated its support for the three principles set out by the Quartet, and in that context we consider that the essence of those principles is contained in the present draft resolution.

I would like to express our gratitude to the numerous delegations that have requested to be included as sponsors of the draft resolution. On behalf of the sponsors, I would like to express our sincere hope that all delegations will be in a position to support this important draft resolution, as they did last year.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.46.

Mr. Liden (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, a draft resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, contained in document A/61/L.46.

Since the origin of resolutions on this matter at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, in 1992, and through the subsequent establishment of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the emergency response capacity of the United Nations has been strengthened considerably. Operational agencies, such as the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF, continue to respond rapidly and effectively in humanitarian relief. OCHA and the mechanisms for inter-agency coordination, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, have enhanced coordination among the humanitarian organizations of the United Nations and with non-United Nations partners.

Significant challenges remain, however, in the implementation of important principles for humanitarian assistance as well as in humanitarian funding and coordination. The draft resolution before us today should contribute to further progress in strengthening the coordination of the United Nations humanitarian system.

I would like to announce that, since the draft resolution was introduced to the Assembly, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belize, El Salvador, Estonia, the Gambia, Georgia, Israel, Jamaica, Moldova, the Philippines, Romania, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United States of America.

My delegation is grateful for the improvements made in the text by colleagues through a series of informal consultations. We would like to thank the sponsors and other delegations for the good and constructive spirit of cooperation and partnership in which the consultations were held. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Jean-Marc Hoscheit, for ably guiding our work.

The draft resolution addresses issues of principle for humanitarian protection and assistance, as well as issues related to efforts to further strengthen international humanitarian response. In the first category, we recognize gender-based violence as a growing concern in humanitarian emergencies. The draft resolution urges all States to take effective measures to address gender-based violence and encourages organizations of the United Nations to strengthen their support services for victims.

I would also like to highlight that the draft reaffirms the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance, and calls upon Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure safe and unhindered access to affected populations. It expresses the General Assembly's grave concern at violence deliberately directed against civilian populations in many emergency situations. It calls upon States to adopt preventive measures and effective responses to acts of violence against civilian populations and invites States to promote a culture of protection.

In the area of humanitarian funding and coordination, the main issue is to consolidate the three-pillar agenda of humanitarian reform: to strengthen humanitarian response capacities, to improve humanitarian coordination and to enhance predictable and adequate funding.

In order to build strong United Nations leadership at the field level and to support country ownership and cooperation, efforts to strengthen the Humanitarian Coordinator need to be intensified. The draft resolution encourages OCHA to continue its efforts to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian action and calls upon relevant humanitarian actors to improve the humanitarian response capacities at all levels and coordination at the field level and to enhance transparency, performance and accountability. The draft resolution also encourages the United Nations to pursue recent efforts to strengthen partnerships with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as well as humanitarian non-governmental organizations.

Humanitarian funding remains crucial to ensure adequate United Nations response capacity, and there has been progress in developing a more coherent approach. The draft resolution calls for further development of the consolidated appeals process as an instrument for strategic planning. It also emphasizes the need to mobilize adequate resources for humanitarian assistance.

In last year's resolution (resolution 60/124), Member States decided to upgrade the Central Emergency Revolving Fund into a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). It was the first concrete manifestation of the overall United Nations reform process after the World Summit. Sweden was an early believer in the Fund, but few could have predicted its enormous success. Who would have expected contributions from as many as 67 Member States, some of them humanitarian donors for the first time? The ambitious target for the first year of operations was $250 million, and the Fund reached $298 million.

Last week, donors had already pledged the impressive amount of $345 million for 2007. Sweden's contribution to the CERF for 2007 will also increase — from this year's $41 million to more than $50 million. The draft resolution before us welcomes the establishment of the CERF, urges all Member States to consider making voluntary contributions to the Fund and reaffirms our common funding target of $500 million by 2008.

My delegation and our fellow sponsors hope that the draft resolution contained in document A/61/L.46 will be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/61/L.42, A/61/L.44, A/61/L.45 as orally corrected, A/61/L.46, and A/61/L.47 as orally corrected.

I call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Ross (United States of America): I speak with reference to draft resolution A/61/L.47, on assistance to the Palestinian people. Traditionally, the United States has been pleased to join the consensus on this resolution. It regrets that it cannot do so this year and will abstain.

I must emphasize that the United States shares the concern of the international community regarding the hardships facing the Palestinian people. The Arab world, and the Palestinian people in particular, are aware of the significant, continuing assistance of the United States to the Palestinian people for basic human needs and for civil society and private sector development.

Through its substantial financial contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United States has consistently demonstrated its support for humanitarian relief efforts for Palestinian refugees. In 2006, the United States was the largest single contributor of assistance to the Palestinian people, committing more than $135 million to UNRWA, including $50.85 million towards UNRWA's emergency appeal to aid refugees in the West Bank and Gaza, announced on 14 July by the United States, Palestinian Authority President Abbas and UNRWA Commissioner AbuZayd. Nonetheless, the United States cannot support this particular draft resolution, because it fails to include language on the need for the Palestinian Authority Government to accept the three Quartet principles: renunciation of violence and terror; recognition of Israel; and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Road Map.

Although the draft resolution properly welcomes the role currently being played by the temporary international mechanism in assisting the Palestinian people, it regrettably fails to note that that mechanism was created as a specific consequence of the failure of the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority Government to commit itself to the Quartet principles. This being so, any resolution must make explicit reference to both the

temporary international mechanism and the Quartet principles. It should also encourage the provision of assistance via United Nations agencies, other international organizations and the Quartet-approved temporary international mechanism. For those reasons, the United States cannot support the draft resolution and must abstain.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/61/L.42, A/61/L.44, A/61/L.45 as orally corrected, A/61/L.46 and A/61/L.47 as orally corrected.

Draft resolution A/61/L.42 is entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Guyana and Zambia. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.42?

Draft resolution A/61/L.42 was adopted (resolution 61/131).

The Acting President: Draft resolution A/61/L.44 is entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Italy has become a sponsor. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.44?

Draft resolution A/61/L.44 was adopted (resolution 61/132).

The Acting President: Draft resolution A/61/L.45 is entitled "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel". Since the introduction of the draft resolution, Angola has become a sponsor. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.45, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/61/L.45, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 61/133).

The Acting President: Draft resolution A/61/L.46 is entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations". May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.46?

Draft resolution A/61/L.46 was adopted (resolution 61/134).

The Acting President: Draft resolution A/61/L.47, as orally corrected, is entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

Since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries has become sponsors: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Croatia, Estonia, the Gambia, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Lichtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South

Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Fiji, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Draft resolution A/61/L.47, as orally corrected, was adopted by 159 votes to none, with 7 abstentions (resolution 61/135).

[Subsequently, the delegations of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Saint Lucia advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: I would like to inform members that, owing to the lateness of the hour, we will hear those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position on the resolutions just adopted and will take up the remaining items tomorrow, immediately following the adjournment of the tenth emergency special session.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.